

SUPPORT FOR THE AMENDMENT

This Amendment amends Claims 1 and 25. Support for the amendments is found in the specification and claims as originally filed. In particular, support for Claims 1 and 25 is found in the specification at least at page 4, line 29 ("organic chloride salt"). No new matter would be introduced by entry of these amendments.

Upon entry of these amendments, Claims 1-29 will be pending in this application. Claims 1, 10, 22 and 25 are independent.

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION

Applicants respectfully request entry of the foregoing and reexamination and reconsideration of the application, as amended, in light of the remarks that follow.

Applicants thank the Examiner for the courtesies extended to their representative during the August 17, 2004, personal interview. Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication at the interview that "this amendment would appear to make the claims allowable in the absence of any further art rejection". Interview Summary dated August 17, 2004.

As discussed at the personal interview, the present invention relates to the production and purification of metallic elements using electrolysis at or near room temperature in an electrolyte containing an ionic liquid comprising an organic chloride salt.

Claims 1-2 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent 3,537,961 ("White"). White discloses a process in which a copper bearing ore is chlorinated to yield a water soluble copper chloride residue that is subsequently leached with water. White at Abstract.

However, White fails to suggest the independent Claim 1 limitations of "providing an ore containing a metallic element; reacting chlorine gas with the ore to form a chloride of the metallic element; mixing the chloride of the metallic element in an ionic liquid at a

temperature from 0°C to 200°C to form an electrolyte; ... wherein ... the ionic liquid comprises an ***organic chloride salt***". Thus, the rejection over White should be withdrawn.

Claims 25-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent 4,226,685 ("Portal"). Portal discloses electrolytic treatment of plating wastes using an electrode including a basket-like compartment 24 holding conductive carbonaceous particles 26. Portal at column 3, lines 44-47; column 4, lines 21-23; Figs. 1-2. Portal discloses adding small amounts of chloride ion to the plating waste to aid in the destruction of cyanide ions in the plating waste. Portal at column 5, lines 44-46.

However, Portal fails to suggest the independent Claim 25 limitations of an "electrolysis cell comprising ... an electrolyte including an ionic liquid containing ... an ***organic chloride salt***". Thus, the rejection over Portal should be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that the application is in condition for allowance. Applicants respectfully request favorable consideration and prompt allowance of the application.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further is necessary in order to place the application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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